

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the details of facilities provided by Government for the safety of life and property of common passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) some cases come to notice. Milkmen are authorized to travel only in nominated trains which are endorsed on their monthly/quarterly season tickets regular checks are conducted to apprehend milkmen travelling unauthorisely and charged as per rules.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Railway Protection Force as well as Government Railway Police are deputed to keep watch on milkmen and to ensure the security and property of passengers.

Rail Network in Sikkim

1142. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a rail link between Lhasa and Beijing is operational and China has announced the extension of the Lhasa line up to Xigaze and from there to Yatung, a traditional trading centre;

(b) whether it is a fact that Sikkim which shares its border with China is very worried with the proposed rail network as the State does not have even a mile of railway track; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to create a rail network and to improve the existing highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The Railway line from Lhasa in Tibet autonomous region to Golmud in Qinghai province of China was formally opened on 01.07.2006 which provides rail connectivity from Beijing to Lhasa. Government has seen reports in Chinese media which indicate that there are plans to extend the Railway line to the border between China and Nepal.

(b) and (c) A Survey for new rail link from Siviok to Rangpo has been taken up. 2-laning with paved shoulder of 41 km. of existing NH-31A from West Bengal border to Gangtok is included in Phase-A of Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in North-Eastern region (SARDP-NE) to be implemented by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). This is targeted for completion by March, 2009.

Compensation to Mumbai blasts victims

†1143. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of victims of Mumbai rail bomb blasts provided with the compensation, alongwith the amount thereof;

(b) the number of victims who have not received any compensation till now; and

(c) the steps taken to check such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Compensation is paid only after a decree is awarded on a claim filed in the Railway Claims Tribunal by the victims or by dependents of the deceased passengers. Upto 23.11.2006, 272 compensation claims have been filed. However, Railways have disbursed *ex-gratia* at enhanced rates, the details of which are as follows:—

Classification	No. of cases	No. of cases in which ex-gratia paid	Rate of ex-gratia	Amount paid. (Rs. in crores)	No. of cases pending	Reason for delay
Death	187	186	Rs. 5 lakhs	9.30	1	Body unidentified
Grievous injury	540	531	Rs. 50,000/-	2.65	9	Addresses of the injured not available.
Simple injury	327	315	Rs. 10,000/-	0.315	12	-do-
TOTAL:	1054	1032	-	12.265	22	

(c) The following measures are being taken to improve security arrangements at important and vulnerable railway stations:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.